

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: SOVIET GAS PROCESSING

REFS: (A) MOSCOW 10098, (B) MOSCOW 9989, (C) MOSCOW 9766

SUMMARY: THE JULY 18 IZVESTIYA DESCRIBES SERIOUS TRANSPORT
BOTTLENECKS RESTRICTING GROWTH INPROCESSING OF
ASSOCIATED GAS FROM WEST SIBERIAN OIL FIELDS. INSUFFICIENT
RAILWAY AND PIPELINE CAPACITY ARE THE CHIEF PROBLEMS
DEMANDING RAPID SOLUTION. COUPLED WITH OTHER REPORTS,
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IT CONTRIBUTES TO THE GENERAL IMPRESSION THAT WEST
SIBERIAN GAS PRODUCTION FACES SIGNIFICANT CONSTRUCTIO
BOTTLENECKS, WITH A LACK OF INTER-MINISTRY BEING ONE
MAJOR PROBLEM. END SUMMARY. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. IZVESTIYA REPORTS THAT CAPACITY
TO PROCESS AND REFINE ASSOCIATED GAS IN WEST SIVERIA--

PRIMARILY FROM THE SAMOTLOR OIL FIELD --SHOULD MEET THE 16 MBILLION CU M PLAN FOR 1980. ONE PLANT AT PRADINSKII AND TWO AT NIZHNEVARTOVSK HAVE BEGUN OPERATION, AND TWO MORE PLANTS ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION.HOWEVER, MILLIONS OF CUBIC METERS OF PROCESSED GAS--INCLUDING UNSTABLE GASOLINE--ARE FLARED ANNUALLY AT THOSE PLANTS BECUSE NOT ENOUGH RAILROAD TANK CARS ARE AVAILABLE AND BECUASE PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION IS PROCEEDING BEHIND SCHEDULE. EVEN AT TOP PERFORMANCE, ONLY HALF OF CURRENT GAS PRODUCT OUTPUT TO BE MOVED BY RAIL COULD BE TRANSPORTED UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS. PROCESSED GAS WILL NOT MOVE THROUGH THE NIZHNEVARTOVSK-KUZBASS PIPELINE UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF 1978 AT THE EARLIEST, RATHER THAN THE SECOND QUARTER OF 1977 AS PLANNED.

2. IZVESTIYA SAYS THAT TANK CAR STOCK MUST BE DOUBLED TO MEET WEST SIBERIA'S 1980 GAS PROCESSING PLAN. COMPRESSOR STATION CONSTRUCTION ON PIPELINES MUST ALSO PICK UP. BLAME FOR BOTH PROBLEMS IS PLACED ON THE MINISTRIES OF OIL, GAS AND CONSTRUCTION OF OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISES, WHO HAVE YET "TO FIND A COMMON LANGUAGE" IN DEALING WITH SUPPLY PROBLEMS. IN THE MEANTIME,THE WASTEFUL FLARING OF SIBERIAN GAS IS NOT BEING REDUCED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE
END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE: COMMENT: THIS ARTICLE,
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LIKE RECENT PIECES SUMMARIEZED IN REFTELS, CONTRIBUTES TO GENERAL IMPRESSION THAT WEST SIBERIAN GAS PRODUCTION FACES SIGNIFICANT CONSTRUCTION BOTTLENECKS.SIMILARLY, IT STRESSES A LACK OF INTER-MINISTRY COORDINATION AS THE CHIEF PROBLEM. THE 1980 GOAL OF 16 BILLION CU M IN PROCESSED ASSOCIATED GAS MAY STILL BE MET, PARTICULARLY IF THE NIZNEVARTOVSK-KUZBASS PIPELINE REACHES FULL CAPACITY WELL BEFORE 1980. A MAJOR SHORTFALL WOULD THREATEN TYUMEN OBLAST'S OVERALL GOAL OF 155 BILLION CU M, BUT THAT PROBABLY WILL NOT OCCUR.
TOON

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